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Developing the National TB Strategy Plan for Timor-Leste (2015-2020) through exemplary partnership and collaboration

Tuberculosis is a major public health problem in Timor-Leste. The country has the highest estimated prevalence and incidence of TB in WHO's South East Asia Region. However, significant progress has been made, despite Timor-Leste being one of the youngest nations in the world. Since 2009, TB case finding has been steadily increasing and the treatment success rate has been consistently higher than the global target of 85% for the past number of years. TB remains one of the highest priorities for the Ministry of Health, with TB control services included in the Basic Service Package accessible in all districts.

As the current National Strategic Plan (NSP) will finish in 2015, the National TB Program with technical support from the World Health Organization (WHO), has embarked on the revision of the NSP to cover the period from 2015-2020. The revision of the strategy followed various reviews and assessments of the National TB Program through the Joint Monitoring Mission (JMM), which involved inputs from technical partners such as World Health Organization (WHO), independent agencies, NGOs, civil society organizations and national counterparts.



Dr Merita Monteiro, Head of CDC Department, Ministry of Health makes opening remarks at the TB Stakeholders workshop

The revised National Strategic Plan (NSP) addresses the gaps that were identified during the JMM and also takes into account international developments in TB control such as the goals and objectives based on the recently approved Post 2015 Global TB Control Strategies. The development process of the revised NSP ensured the involvement of all stakeholders including relevant national departments, divisions and programs within the Ministry of Health, international technical partners, such as WHO, NGOs, civil society networks and private clinics. Rigorous steps were followed to ensure that all the concerns, best practices and proposals from stakeholders were taken into consideration during a series of consultative workshops. The opportunity was given to all stakeholders to develop interventions based on the key gaps identified in TB services and control based on their own experiences and the interventions proven to be best for the community of Timor-Leste.

The first consultative stakeholder workshop was held on June 6th, 2014 and the final draft was presented, debated and discussed by the forum on June 13th, 2014. The exemplary involvement of stakeholders at all stages during this process stands to benefit the long term planning and ownership of the country's comprehensive National TB Strategic Plan.



Mr Holger Sawert, WHO Consultant gives recommendations for the National TB Strategic Plan

The implementation of the National TB Strategic Plan by the Ministry of Health will begin in 2015, with continued technical support provided by the World Health Organization, ensuring the delivery of quality TB services to the entire population of Timor-Leste.



Stakeholder meeting for development of the National TB Strategy Plan for Timor-Leste (2015-2020) with representatives from WHO, Ministry of Health, the National TB Control Program, NGOs, civil society networks and private clinics, June 13th Dili, Timor-Leste